

FEATURE

Joy of 59 years together creates undying memories

"I met Bob in a drugstore ... while I was having a soda with my girlfriends, and I thought he was about the handsomest man I had ever seen," recalled my friend and neighbor, Mary. "The first thing I noticed about him was his dark brown hands. He looked so strong! And when he first came to meet my mother, he showed up in a white suit and lavender tie. She told me, I had better hang on to that man!"

Mary and Bob have been hanging on to each other for 59 years. And for the seven years that my husband and I have known them, their marriage has been an inspiration to us. It is obvious to all who know them that they share a genuine love, a beautiful tenderness and a deep respect for each other.

"We love and care about each other," Mary said. "We have fun no matter what we do. We would even have a good time going to the grocery store together. I think a good marriage has to have all these things. And you have to know how to hang loose through the good times and bad."

A few weeks ago, Bob suffered a stroke. One night after returning home from the hospital, Mary told me, "Bob looked so



family matters

BY EILEEN MARX

weak, his hands looked so pale. Our grandson was holding Bob's hands tonight and it was his hands that looked so strong and dark next to Bob's. My grandson reminded me so much of Bob as a young man."

As I listened to Mary talk I began to wonder if the love shared by Mary and Bob is a love from another time. Somehow life seemed a lot easier then. Falling in love was as simple as sharing an ice cream soda.

But over the next few days, as Mary talked about the Depression, World War II, and the fear that her daughter might contract polio, I realized that every generation has its concerns about the economy, its worries about illnesses without a

cure and its fears about war and poverty. It is how we respond to tragedies and challenges like these that helps to define who we are as a family and a society.

Today it seems that we try to control everything, even love. We need to figure it all out, have all the answers, find the perfect match, read the latest "How To" book and wrap it up into a neat little package. Life is too stressful these days to spend the time working on a marriage or hanging in there for the long haul if times get too tough.

Maybe we are taking all the mystery out of love, and in the process we are losing sight of its real meaning. We often forget, I think, that God is there to guide us on our journey with our husband or wife. I also believe that God is there to guide husbands or wives out of abusive or truly destructive marriages and give them strength during their time of grief and anguish.

My former pastor and dear friend, Bishop William Curlin, once remarked that the primary vocation for a married couple is loving one another and building up Christ in each other. As a mother of two young children, this is an important reminder for me.

"Live for one another and through your love you will reach out to your children, your community and to people in need. Children don't make the marriage, they enrich it," Bishop Curlin said. "When a husband and wife look at one another they should see the face of God because Jesus said he would live in each of us. What a price we are paying for losing sight of God in one another."

Once a month my husband and I try to

get away for a romantic dinner, a picnic in the park or, if the grandparents are in town, a cherished night away together. A married couple doesn't need to spend a lot of money to grow in a marriage, but they do need to spend time together. I think it's important to always rediscover the person you fell in love with before the kids arrived, before the 50-hour work week became commonplace and before life somehow became all too stressful. If we take the time to put our marriages first, maybe we too will be blessed to hang in there for 59 years.

A few days ago, Bob died. At the wake, as I knelt before his casket, I felt a gentle squeeze on my shoulder.

"He would be so tickled if he knew you were here," Mary said.

"I think he does, Mary," I whispered back.

Fighting back tears, she said, "Enjoy and treasure every moment with that dear husband of yours; the years go by quicker than you think."

I noticed Bob's hands, they were pale and swollen. As if she were reading my thoughts, Mary said softly, "I tried to put his wedding ring on but his fingers were too swollen from his illness."

But a wedding ring wasn't needed as a symbol of this marriage. All the family and friends who were gathered together this day knew that Bob's life was changed forever the day he fell in love with a young woman named Mary who was wearing a red beret and sipping a soda at a drugstore counter.

Marx lives in Lawrenceville, N.J., with her husband and two children.

Videos saintly, sprightly, silly

NEW YORK (CNS) — The following are home videocassette reviews from the U.S. Catholic Conference Office for Film and Broadcasting. Each videocassette is available on VHS format. Theatrical movies on video have a USCC classification and Motion Picture Association of America rating. All reviews indicate the appropriate age group for the video audience.



Matilda

Dark children's fantasy from the Roald Dahl story in which a book-loving 6-year-old (Mara Wilson) develops magical powers to cope with neglectful, self-centered parents (Danny DeVito and Rhea Perlman) and a vicious school principal, encouraged along the way by a shy but caring teacher (Embeth Davidtz). The picture busily mixes some mean-spirited humor with a gentle affirmation of the joys of reading. Frequent scenes of children in physical danger and a few crude expressions. The USCC classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The MPAA rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

Saints' Gallery of Heaven's Heroes, Volume II: Founders

The program opens with a brief explanation of the church's canonization process, then gives succinct accounts of saints who founded religious orders, including Benedict's sixth-century Benedictines, Francis of Assisi's 13th-century Franciscans, Ignatius of Loyola's 16th-century Jesuits, and Angela Merici's 16th-century Ursulines. The 47-minute video is crisply written and well illustrated with classic and more modern art. Excellent family fare, especially for the youngsters. (Videos with Values, (800) 233-4629)

Saints' Gallery of Heaven's Heroes, Volume III: Saints for All Seasons

This begins with the life of Mary, Queen of Saints, and her feast days,

then explains how St. Valentine, a third-century Roman martyr, became the patron of lovers, how St. Patrick converted Ireland and how St. Nicholas, a fourth-century Syrian bishop, became associated with Santa Claus. The final segment on St. Mary Magdalene uses modern biblical research to discount the medieval interpretation that she was a penitent sinner, highlighting instead her role as the first witness to the Resurrection. Worthwhile family fare.

Riverdance: The Show

Lilting, exuberant celebration of Irish step dancing as conceived by Moya Doherty in a dramatic spectacle combining traditional music with modern footwork showing the influence of other cultures, notably Spanish and Russian dance as well as African-American tap dancing. Produced by RTE and Tyrone Productions, the performance was taped in a Dublin theater, with music for pipes, flutes and drums by Bill Whelan and a dance company headed by Jean Butler and Michael Flatley. Grand family entertainment.

The Cable Guy

One-note comedy stemming from an unstable manic cable installer (Jim Carrey) who becomes a dangerous pest when he tries to make a friend out of a customer (Matthew Broderick). Unfunny life-threatening predicaments, sexual situations and language, coarse expressions and occasional profanity. The USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is PG-13 — parents are strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

The Nutty Professor

Halting comedy in which a klutzy chemistry professor (Jerry Lewis) tries to impress an attractive coed (Stella Stevens) by concocting a potion transforming him into a hip campus idol. Also directed by Lewis, the humor in the Jekyll-Hyde premise is mostly of the manic variety prized by Lewis fans, though others may be less amused by the slapstick and silliness. Romantic complications. The USCC classification is A-I — general patronage. Not rated by the MPAA of America.

JANUARY BINGO CALENDAR

SPECIAL PAID ADVERTISEMENT ■ CALL FOR HOLIDAY CANCELLATIONS

BINGO

DAY	TIME	LOCATION	PHONE
SUNDAY	6:15 pm	St. Stanislaus Church 1150 Hudson Ave., Rochester	716-544-9951
	7:30 pm	Holy Family Church Water Tower Park, Rochester	716-235-0860
	7:30 pm	St. Boniface Church 15 Whalin St., Rochester	716-271-1468
	7:30 pm	St. Rita Church: New Location Knights of Columbus, Barrett Dr., Webster	716-674-1100
MONDAY	7:30pm	St. Michael's Church Corner S. Main & Franklin, Newark	315-331-6753
TUESDAY	10:00 am	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church Bingo Palace, Rochester	716-467-2725
	7:30 pm	St. Stanislaus Church 1150 Hudson Ave., Rochester	716-544-9951
	7:30 pm	St. Helens Church Gates Center Bingo, Westmar Plaza	716-235-1210
	7:30 pm	St. Francis Xavier 316 Bay St. (School Hall)	(716) 288-9700 or 482-3211
WEDNESDAY	7:30 pm	Holy Family Home School Assoc. Water Tower Park, Rochester	716-235-0860
THURSDAY	7:30 pm	St. Stanislaus Church 1150 Hudson Ave., Rochester	716-544-9951
FRIDAY	7:30 pm	St. Margaret Mary Church 380 Empire Blvd., Rochester	(716) 482-9770
SATURDAY	12:30 pm	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church Bingo Palace, Rochester	716-467-2725
	7:30 pm	Good Shepherd Church 3288 E. Henrietta Rd., Rochester	716-334-3518

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